



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Man Pleads Guilty to Voluntary Manslaughter While Armed In the February 2011 Stabbing Death of His Brother - Killing Followed an Argument That Started in Their Apartment -

WASHINGTON - Deon Thornton, 21, of Washington, D.C., pled guilty today to a charge of voluntary manslaughter while armed in connection with the recent stabbing death of his 22-year-old brother, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Thornton pled guilty in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and will be sentenced on April 29, 2011, by the Honorable Judge Gerald I. Fisher. He faces up to 30 years in prison.

The defendant lived with his brother, Derrick Thornton, in an apartment building in the 2200 block of Champlain Street NW. According to the government's evidence, both brothers had been drinking alcohol during the evening of February 11, 2011 and got involved in a verbal argument inside their shared apartment.

At the plea hearing, Deon Thornton admitted that, following the verbal argument, he went to the lobby of the apartment building armed with a knife. In the lobby, Deon Thornton initiated a physical altercation with his brother. During this altercation, Deon Thornton stabbed his unarmed brother multiple times in the chest with the knife.

Shortly thereafter, Deon Thornton fled the scene. Derrick Thornton was transported to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead approximately one hour later.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the efforts of those who worked on the case from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), including Homicide Detectives Robert Arrington and Dwayne Partman. He also commended Paralegal Specialist Phaylyn Hunt and Victim Witness Advocate Marcey Rinker. Finally, he commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Melinda A. Williams, who investigated and prosecuted the case.

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